

Albuquerque International Sunport

ISSUE NO. 10

on course

SUMMER
2001

SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

IN THIS ISSUE



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Updated web site has great new information. Cover



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THE SUNPORT ONLINE



www.cabq.gov/airport

A redesigned Web site for the Albuquerque International Sunport means users can obtain real-time flight information as well as easier access to information about everything from tourism and travel to current weather conditions.

"The redesigned site makes the Sunport one of the nation's leading innovators in serving information to the public," says Albuquerque Mayor Jim Baca. "With a Web browser, anybody can check the status of flights as well as plan travel in the Land of Enchantment. I suspect this will be one of the most bookmarked sites around."

The site went online in August. Information about the airport is continually updated — Web users see the same Flight Information System data as is displayed on the "Arrivals/Departures" screens located around the Sunport.

"If you're picking up friends or family at the airport — or catching a flight — you don't have to go through the process of calling a specific airline and navigating its voicemail system in order to see if a flight is on time," Baca says.

The site has a new look and feel with easier navigation, says Aviation Director Jay Czar.

The site also serves as a conduit for news about the Sunport and provides information and links for the traveling public — including the thousands of people whose first experience in New

"The redesigned site makes the Sunport one of the nation's leading innovators in serving information to the public."

Mexico is at the Sunport.

"We've tried to develop this from the consumer's standpoint," Czar says. "We looked at what somebody from say, Germany, would like to know if flying to New Mexico."

Thus there are maps and information on ground transportation options from rental cars to nearby bus and train service. Then there is basic tourist information, along with links to organizations with more extensive tourism information.

"Whenever possible, we give visitors the option of immediately linking to a service," Czar says.

For example, a list of airlines and service to and from destinations around the country includes links to the

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SOUTHWEST

BRINGING IN AWARDS

Sometimes the biggest is also the best.

Southwest Airlines Sunport operation, by far the largest airline operation at the airport, recently was named "Station of the Year," a huge accolade for the 230 Southwest employees involved in flight operations.

The Albuquerque operation was picked over 58 other Southwest operations around the nation.

"It's all our frontline employees who deserve the credit," says Frank Stockton, Southwest Station Manager at the Sunport. "Our folks really care."

The Sunport station was picked based on the following criteria:

- ON-TIME RECORD
- CUSTOMER HANDLING
- NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
- COMMENDATIONS
- PRODUCTIVITY
- BAGGAGE HANDLING
- CUSTOMER SERVICE
- LOAD FACTORS



*Frank Stockton,
Southwest Station
Manager*

"This is a huge deal for our largest carrier," says Aviation Director Jay Czar. "I personally know how hard-working the Southwest crews are, and it's nice to see them get the recognition they deserve."

Training, good planning and clear expectations all contribute to why the Southwest team is so good, Stockton says.



But he points to another factor as a reason for the ranking — the four-year reign of Greg Winston as station manager, which ended when Stockton took over at the beginning of 2000. Winston now works in the corporate offices in Dallas.

"I was fortunate enough to follow a great station manager," says Stockton, who also has been station manager in Las Vegas and Omaha.

The Southwest Sunport crew comprises customer-service representatives, skycaps, baggage handlers, provisioning agents and ramp workers. They handle 128 operations (or takeoffs and landings) a day. More than 3 million travelers arrive or depart with Southwest at the Sunport each year.



Customer service representatives (left) check in passengers and otherwise deal with the public for Southwest, while the operations staff (above) make sure the planes stay on schedule.

Ground crews are cross-trained to help Southwest make those short turnarounds so vital to the airline's success.

Training, good planning and clear expectations all contribute to why the Southwest team is so good, Stockton says.

Baggage handlers are an integral part of the reason the Albuquerque station was honored by Southwest.



SOUTHWEST TO:

CHICAGO

CHICAGO

Albuquerque's already impressive array of nonstop destinations continues to grow with Southwest Airlines adding a daily flight to Chicago's Midway Field beginning Aug. 10.

While Albuquerque already has nonstop service to Chicago at O'Hare International Airport, the Midway flight offers a downtown alternative to travelers, says Terry Eisenbart, Southwest's New Mexico Marketing Manager.

In addition, the daily flight means customers can connect with Southwest's strong lineup of nonstops from Midway. For example, travelers from Albuquerque could travel to Long Island, N.Y., with just the Chicago stop.

Southwest also is adding another daily nonstop to and from Tucson on Aug. 10, Eisenbart says.

She notes that another recent addition to Southwest's Albuquerque service, a daily nonstop to Baltimore-Washington International Airport, has proven to be a stellar performer.

CHICAGO TIMES TWO

Albuquerque already has nonstop service to Chicago at O'Hare International Airport. Now the Midway flight will offer a downtown alternative to travelers.

SOUTHWEST CREW

WINS AWARD

Southwest Airlines crew recently received the Outstanding Flight assistance Award from the Federal Aviation Administration for assistance in persuading a private pilot not to risk his life by flying in dangerous conditions.

The FAA's Doug Murphy, from the Southwest Region Air Traffic Division in Fort Worth, presented the award to Capt. Robert Graves and First Officer John Freeman in a recent Sunport ceremony.

The incident occurred in January, when the pilot of a Cessna 150 was arguing with local flight controllers that he wanted to take off despite terrible winter weather.

The Southwest crew, which was taxiing at the time, leaped into the discussion to talk the pilot out of flying.

"The Southwest crew suggested the pilot 'go to the hotel.' They were quite forceful with him," Murphy says.

The opinions of professional pilots were enough to dissuade the pilot from attempting the flight, according to Murphy.

Murphy also congratulated FAA and Sunport personnel for their role in stopping the dangerous flight.





ALBUQUERQUE'S 'OTHER' AIRPORT TO GET MASTER PLAN

Rapid growth at Albuquerque's "other" airport, Double Eagle II, means additional impetus to develop a Master Plan for the general aviation facility.

The airport, located far out on the West Mesa, now sees around 90,000 operations (takeoffs and landings) a year as general aviation enjoys a nationwide resurgence. The demand for new facilities is so strong that Albuquerque's Aviation Department is proceeding with the first Master Plan for Double Eagle II, says Jim Hinde, project manager for the plan as well as Manager of Engineering and Environmental Affairs for the department.

"We don't want to develop the airport in a hodgepodge manner," Hinde says.

Already, the two fixed-base operators — Aerowest and West Mesa Aviation — are involved in expansions and want more lease space, Hinde says.

Then there's the little matter of Eclipse Aviation. The startup jet manufacturer plans a campus at the airport that could be home to thousands of employees. To land Eclipse, local and federal agencies agreed to make numerous improvements at Double Eagle II. Several suppliers for Eclipse also want to locate at Double Eagle II, but none are ready to make announcements, Hinde says. Eclipse currently is housed in office space and hangars at the Sunport until the new campus can be constructed.

The planning process is similar to the Master Plan Update currently being prepared for the Sunport. First, there's an inventory of assets, followed by forecasts of needs.

The contractor for the plan, URS Corp., is nearly finished with the inventory and forecast phase. Public meetings involving stakeholders will be held this summer to develop the final set of recommendations for the Master Plan. Then that document will be reviewed by several local agencies, including the

Administration and City Council, before it is finalized.

Among the possibilities are an additional runway because crosswinds make Double Eagle II unusable at times. Also, strengthening and lengthening the two current runways are possibilities.

The application process to the Federal Aviation Administration for a contract tower at Double Eagle II has started, Hinde says, and the Master Plan will be used to decide where the tower should be located. Contract towers, which have the same standards as towers operated by the Federal Aviation Administration, often are used at smaller airports when operations are busy enough to warrant air traffic control.

"It's getting very congested out there on the weekends from what we hear from pilots," Hinde says. In addition, many cross-country general aviation flights refuse to refuel at Double Eagle II because it is not controlled airspace, he says.

Hinde says growth at Double Eagle II is driven by the continued resurgence in general aviation across the nation. More and more people are learning to fly and more individuals are purchasing airplanes.

Some planes and pilots have relocated from Coronado Airport on Albuquerque's north side. There is continued speculation that Coronado eventually may close, which would put even more demand on Double Eagle II.



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REGIONAL JET SERVICE TO Oklahoma City and Tulsa



The Sunport gained yet another nonstop destination and a new airline with the May debut of Great Plains Airlines' regional jet service to Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Flights proceed to Nashville, Tenn., giving access to that market with no change of planes.

The airline offers three flights each weekday, one flight on Saturdays and two on Sundays.

"It's time to change airlines, not planes," says Jim Swartz, president and CEO of Great Plains. Previously, travelers between Oklahoma and New Mexico had to go through hub cities and/or change planes.

Great Plains flies new state-of-the-art Fairchild Dornier 328 regional jets. The 32-passenger jets feature a roomy cabin as well as efficient operation. "We can break even with just half our seats filled," Swartz says.

Swartz says Great Plains studied the market extensively before deciding to add the Sunport as its fourth destination. Extensive business connections between Oklahoma and New Mexico plus tourism between the two states will

make the new routes a winner, he says.

"New Mexico in general, and Santa Fe in particular, are among the most popular tourist destinations in the United States. Now Oklahomans can go jet direct to Albuquerque and either enjoy their stay there, or be in Santa Fe within an hour of landing," Swartz says. "The people of Oklahoma have long wanted and deserved this service, so we expect a great response on the flights from Oklahoma City and Tulsa."

Great Plains is a startup airline. The company acquired planes when it purchased Tulsa-based Ozark Airlines in March. The service between Tulsa, Oklahoma City and Nashville started in April.

Flights from Albuquerque fly to Oklahoma City. After a 10-minute turnaround, the jets proceed to Tulsa and then Nashville. Fares are competitive with other airlines, Swartz says. "We will compete with great service."

Swartz characterizes Great Plains as a "hub-bypass" airline. Its next goal is service between Oklahoma and Washington, D.C. The airline is actively seeking more regional jets.

GREAT PLAINS

NOW IN NEW MEXICO



Great Plains CEO Jim Swartz announces service.



WEATHER SYSTEMS PROCESSOR



Albuquerque Aviation Director Jay Czar addresses dignitaries at ceremony marking dedication of the WSP.



Travel in and out of the Sunport is now safer with the debut of the Federal Aviation Administration's new tool for air traffic controllers – the Weather Systems Processor, or WSP.

The system was introduced at a gala event in April. The Sunport is the first WSP deployment for the FAA, so chosen because the airport has played a key role in development of the system.

The WSP is an add-on to existing aircraft-tracking radars that provides timely information about potentially hazardous microburst and wind shear weather events. The system also improves the management of air traffic near the Sunport by forecasting gust-induced wind shifts, precipitation and storm-tracking.

Tower controllers see two screens. One, called a ribbon display, provides weather information as text. The other monitor, the graphic situation display, paints a rapidly updated, brightly colored two-dimensional picture of weather conditions,

including movement and position prediction for weather cells in relation to the airport's runways.

"WSP is a significant aid in terminal air traffic management during adverse weather conditions, providing both safety and delay benefits to the flying public," said Mike Baldrige, the FAA's air traffic manager at the Sunport. "There is improved safety through warnings of wind shear events and gust front activity that might affect runway departure and landing zones."

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has been developing the new software/hardware package since the 1980s.

As WSP is deployed at more airports around the country, the new technology should help reduce weather-related delays.

The ceremony was attended by contractors and FAA representatives from around the country. Ruth Leverenz, the FAA's assistant administrator for regional and center operations, spoke on behalf of the agency. Albuquerque Aviation Director Jay Czar thanked the assemblage for choosing the Sunport for the first deployment of the WSP.

RIO GRANDE AIR is continuing its rapid expansion with the addition of service to **SANTA FE AND RUIDOSO** from the Sunport.



Neither market had air service from the Sunport and it's logical to add them, says Tim Wooldridge, president of the Taos-based airline. The expansion also marks the growth of interlocking service around New Mexico. For example, people with business in the state capital have easy access from Taos, Farmington, Albuquerque and Ruidoso.

In the last few months, Rio Grande Air added Farmington and boosted service to Durango. "We're doing extremely well in Durango," Wooldridge says.

Rio Grande Air operates two luxurious Cessna Grand Caravans, with plans to add a third. The ultra-reliable aircraft are perfect to serve New Mexico, Wooldridge says.



Rio Grande Air's flight schedules and ticket purchasing are available on the Web at www.iflyrga.com.

reservation services of those airlines. The same applies for rental cars and other services.

Stories about features of the Sunport — such as its famed art collection and new rental car facility — are part of the site. Such features and news will be continually updated as needed, says Maggie Santiago, the Sunport's Public Information Officer.

"The redesigned site also will be a resource for the community in finding information about the Sunport," Santiago says. "We'll have everything from monthly passengers statistics to archived electronic copies of the 'On Course' newsletter."



Content and design for the revamped site was developed by Signal Creative, an Albuquerque ad agency, under contract to the Aviation Department.



"If you're picking up friends or family at the airport — or catching a flight — you don't have to go through the process of calling a specific airline and navigating its voicemail system in order to see if a flight is on time," Baca says.



Mayor Jim Baca



Painted Ponies ride into the sunport

Mayor Jim Baca shows off a display of Painted Ponies that were unveiled at the Sunport recently. In the "Trail of the Painted Ponies" program, 100 artists each received a "blank" sculpture of a horse to paint or otherwise personalize. Six of the ponies will remain on display at the Sunport until the program's end in November, when the ponies will be auctioned to benefit a variety of arts and non-profit groups. Other ponies will be on display at the State Fair in Albuquerque from September 7-23, 2001.

SUNPORT PASSENGER TOTALS: APRIL, MAY, JUNE



April

2 0 0 1	
Passenger total	521,842
Southwest Airlines	270,391
American	43,421
Delta	40,984
United	35,576
America West	35,227
TWA	29,210
Continental	28,963
Northwest	13,858
Mesa	11,076
Skywest	6,266
Frontier	5,606
Rio Grande Air	1,264
2 0 0 0	
Passenger total	525,566

May

2 0 0 1	
Passenger total	564,753
Southwest Airlines	286,027
Delta	48,790
American	46,592
United	41,041
America West	37,770
TWA	32,355
Continental	31,993
Northwest	14,741
Mesa	10,665
Frontier	7,252
Sky West	6,561
Rio Grande Air	966
2 0 0 0	
Passenger total	565,649

June

2 0 0 1	
Passenger total	600,233
Southwest Airlines	308,426
Delta	52,961
American	46,390
United	40,657
America West	38,043
TWA	34,456
Continental	32,335
Northwest	15,489
Mesa	10,314
Sky West	8,513
Frontier	9,392
Great Plains	2,091
Rio Grande Air	1,076
2 0 0 0	
Passenger total:	584,206

TOTAL PASSENGERS 2001

2001 3,081,507

2000 3,070,952

Percentage change over previous year .34%

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